

## Patent claims

1. A PEM fuel cell which comprises at least two terminal plates which clamp in a membrane which, apart from the outermost edge, is covered on both sides by an electrode layer, the covering of the membrane with at least one electrode layer projecting into the structural edge region of the fuel cell.
2. The PEM fuel cell as claimed in claim 1, in which in the edge region seals are arranged between the membrane and the frame element.
3. A method for operating a PEM fuel cell, in which the formation of product water in the structural edge region of the fuel cell is utilized to wet the membrane.
4. A fuel cell storage battery which is made from fuel cells which are electrically series-connected and comprises a stack of at least two fuel cells as claimed in one of claims 1 to 3 which are mechanically connected to one another.